

'I do wish you would be a little more responsible in your attitude to our mission, Doctor!'

The Doctor scowled. If there was one thing he resented, it was being saddled with this arrogant young slip of a Time Lady.

'Look, you've got the coordinates totally wrong,' continued Romana. 'The sixth segment isn't on the planet Atrios at all. You were going to put us off course by parsecs! When all this is over, I'll have to give you a lesson in astral navigation, won't I, K9? To make up for all those courses you failed at the Academy.'

The Doctor's mood darkened further. I'd like to teach you a lesson, too, he thought to himself. But despite himself he glanced at the readout from the tracer, and saw that she was right: it was sending them to the planet Sorgas. Now what was it about Sorgas that he ought to remember? As he struggled with his memory, he noticed something else odd. It wasn't an even signal. Now what could be causing that?

Romana folded her arms and assumed an air of impatience. 'Are you going to reset the controls or not, Doctor?'

Lost in thought, the Doctor took a moment to reply. 'Well, I think I can leave that in your expert hands,' he said with a hint of underlying sarcasm, before returning to the two problems dancing just ahead of his mind.

'You could lend a hand!' said Romana, holding down one lever whilst struggling to reach over to the button by the tracer on another panel of the console. 'It isn't easy, breaking a journey like this in midflight.'

The Doctor shook himself from his abstraction to see Romana bent across the console, her white silk dress stretched tight over her round seat. Just for a moment he was tempted to land a sharp, open-palmed smack on her upturned bottom. That would break her haughty demeanor for once! What would she say, he wondered, then agitated his curly head as if shaking himself back into his senses. They did have the Key to Time to find, after all.

Romana disentangled herself from the controls and listened as the familiar sound of the TARDIS engaged. They were landing on Sorgas. K9 extended his probe to the base of the console, making his usual can't-be-too-careful

doublechecks on their new environment. After a more cursory glance, the Doctor pulled the lever to open the doors, and Romana plucked the tracer out of the console. Both made their way towards the planet surface, the Doctor eager for another world, Romana keen to find the last segment and be on her way back to her dissertation on Gallifrey. 'You stay there until we call, K9,' said the Doctor.

As they left through the doors, neither heard the metal dog's cry of 'Danger, master.'

'I just knew that signal wasn't right,' said the Doctor as he stalked back into the TARDIS with Romana at his heels. 'The real trace was being bounced off this planet to put us on a false trail. Probably the work of one of the Black Guardian's agents.'

Romana shrugged. 'Well, it made a nice break for us. What a pretty planet! And the atmosphere was so ... relaxing.' She stretched her arms languidly in the air.

K9 saw his cue: 'Master, the planetary atmosphere...'

'Shut up, K9!' snapped the Doctor. All his pent-up irritation with the metal dog and its relentless logicity began to boil over. 'You never fucking know the answer when it's important, so be quiet now when it isn't!' With a strangled electronic bleep, K9 took himself into shutdown mode for five minutes. 'And as for you, miss, it's high time I ...' But as the Doctor turned to remonstrate with Romana, he saw her white form disappearing through the door that led to the TARDIS wardrobe.

'Just going to change, Doctor,' she called over her shoulder, her bright tone contrasting with the dark fury in his voice.

For fifteen minutes, the Doctor fumed in solitary silence. First she makes an elementary navigation error, he thought, wanders round a 'pretty planet' when they should be trying to save the universe from eternal chaos, and now she wastes time changing her clothes! His mind whirled around its spiral of rage until he heard the click of the door.

He had never noticed that Romana had such long legs. Bare from where her white socks ended just below her knees, up to the sharp, pleated hemline that brushed the tops of her thighs. 'Do you like it?' smiled Romana, holding out the sides of her tiny, kilted skirt as if she were about to curtsy. 'I've had my eye on it for some time.'

'Very nice,' said the Doctor with forced politeness. 'But we've got a job to do, remember.'

Romana nodded absently, preoccupied with smoothing down her crisp white blouse and straightening her striped tie.

The Doctor persisted. She wasn't going to get away with it, not this time. 'So you'll be resetting our course back to the planet Atrios, won't you?' You made the mistake, said his tone, so you put it right.

Romana nodded and crossed to the console. Her little skirt swayed gently as she moved. Her hands moved over the controls, restoring the coordinates she had overridden before. The plaid skirt sat neatly on her bottom, its pleats splaying with the curve of her hips and then, from the outermost point of the posterior parabola, hanging the last few inches down to the hem. She leaned forward across the console. A thin white crescent appeared between the pink of her thighs and the red of her skirt, spreading like a widening smile as she strained to reach the button by the tracer. The Doctor raised his open palm high.

K9's responsibility circuits had been ticking over, and now he chose his moment to try another approach. 'Warning, mistress!' he chirruped. In an instant, the Doctor snatched back his hand and lashed out with his foot. His boot made contact with K9's metal rear and the robot dog was propelled across the room with a dribble of highpitched electronic protest that quickly subsided as he hit the wall.

Romana straightened up and span round. 'Doctor, what are you doing?' she asked. 'Poor K9! You've been behaving very oddly since we got back. If there's a standard of oddness of your behavior, that is.'

'And what's that supposed to mean, miss?' asked the Doctor with a face like thunder.

'It means,' began Romana through gritted teeth, before catching the Doctor's look. She stifled the insult before it could come, and said airily, 'Nothing!'

'I told the White Guardian this would never work,' fumed the Doctor. 'Told him! And would he listen?' He took a menacing step towards Romana. With each hand she unconsciously took the hem of her kilted skirt between finger and thumb as she backed away. But the Doctor was too fast for her. 'I'm going to give you something you've been needing for at least a hundred years!' he growled as he half dragged, half carried her across the control room. Seating himself on the back of K9, he put Romana firmly across his knee.

'What are you doing, Doctor?' squealed Romana. The only answer was a dismissive flick of the wrist as he tossed her skirt aside. The rush of air caused a momentary chill in her rear, and then she felt the stinging impact of a sharp slap.

Romana's bottom and thighs vibrated under the Doctor's open hand as it laid smack after solid smack across the rifted white seat of her panties. The control room resounded with the percussive slaps, mixed with wails and gasps from the pretty victim who could only flutter her feet in the air and hope with every smack that it would be the last.

Finally the end came, and the Doctor set Romana on her feet again. She smoothed down her inverted skirt, then rumbled it again as she vigorously rubbed her sore bottom. For a moment, her eyes met the Doctor's: after this, nothing could ever be the same between them. And then K9 whirred back into life.

'Master! Urgent! Danger!' he chirped. 'Planetary atmosphere has high concentration of volatilized diphenylacetelyde! Danger! Danger!'

'Of course!' said Romana. 'Diphenylacetelyde is a biochemical agent that removes a subject's inhibitions.'

'Sorgas, the planet of forbidden dreams,' said the Doctor. 'I knew I'd remember it eventually. The planet where everyone's most hidden desires become a reality.'

Romana and the Doctor looked at one another, each bemused by what they had discovered about the other.

‘So,’ thought the Doctor, ‘Romana secretly likes to dress up as a schoolgirl.’

‘So,’ thought Romana, ‘the Doctor has a secret desire to spank me.’

The next thought was the same for them both: ‘I wonder why it didn’t affect me.’